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Bangalore Mirror

Merry Christmas

TEMP Max 25 | Min 15 | Humidity 48% Mostly cloudy Sensex 85,408 | Nifty 26,142 | Gold 1,38,225 | Silver 2,23,432 | Dollar 89.72 | Euro 105.75 | GBP 121.17

'TIS THE SEASON

From unique eco-friendly Christmas tree standing over 25 feet tall, decked up streets and festive shopfronts, Bengaluru is spreading the cheer

PAGE 2

CHEATING HUB

Workings of dubious call centre that had employed youngsters from across country to run large-scale 'digital arrest' cyber scam to dupe Americans

PAGE 5

Parking rule creates furore at Bengaluru airport as fliers report long walks to designated pick-up zones that is proving troublesome to elderly and those with more luggage; move favours cab aggregators, say passengers

ROUGH LANDING FOR NEW RULE

Citizen starts online petition to urge BIAL to rethink change

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Bengaluru airport's new parking rule, restricting arrivals to private white-board vehicles near terminals while directing commercial yellow-board taxis to designated pick-up zones has sparked widespread criticism from passengers.

Many have complained that the long walk to these designated zones is inconvenient, particularly for senior citizens, pregnant women, and persons with disabilities.

One such passenger, who had a difficult experience after the new parking zones were assigned, has started an online petition on Change.org demanding a rollback of the new pick-up rule at Kempegowda International Airport (KIA).

The petition was started by Hareesh Amjuri, a resident of Hosa Road and a sales and marketing professional from Bengaluru. In the petition, he stated: "Commercial vehicles arriving at Terminal 1 should proceed to the P4 and P3 parking zones, while those serving Terminal 2 are directed to the P2 parking zone. The recent changes in the pick-up rules at Kempegowda International Airport (KIA)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

> "Apart from select cab aggregators, if we book a regular taxi, we have to walk nearly 1.5 km to P4. It is very inconvenient for persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and parents with infants and toddlers
>
> —Hareesh Amjuri, petitioner

Plastic party at movie halls

Fans deck up single screen theatres with banned plastic buntings as officials ignore nagging issue

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As a part of measures to protect the environment, the government has banned single use plastic. The then Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) authorities used to conduct raids on shops and single-use plastic manufacturing units. They imposed penalties and ordered closure of single use plastic manufacturing units in the city. However, its use continues without any hurdles at single screen movie theaters.

Fans of the hero or supporters of the movie producer or director decorate the movie theater premises with huge cutouts and plastic buntings. It is quite surprising to see that no GBA official or City Corporation officials or Karnataka State Pollution Control Board officials take action against those responsible for using single use plastic.

Plastic buntings have become a common sight at single screen theaters on Kempe Gowda Road and other areas in the city. Though the bursting of firecrackers ends with the morning show on Friday, the plastic buntings remain on the theater

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Land of imagination

Ranga Shankara returns with its signature intimate storytelling programme, Little Cloud, packed with an enchanting experience of creativity, laughter and imagination. The sessions are held for children aged 4 to 6 every Saturday and Sunday. **Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; When: January 3 to March 15, 10 am**

02 Jingle all the way

Spade Pirates are set to take the stage for a high-energy Jingle Bell Rock special — a night where Christmas cheer meets electrifying riffs, groovy rhythms, and festive madness. **Where: Hard Rock Cafe, Whitefield; When: December 25, 1 pm**

03 Historial journey

Atta Galatta is hosting the launch of Soul Climate, the latest novel by acclaimed writer Inez Baranay. Soul Climate reimagines the idea of India through the perspective of Turkish intellectual and freedom fighter Halide Edib, who visited Delhi in 1935 to deliver a series of lectures. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: December 28, 6 pm**

04 Theatrical escapades

Bangalore Little Theatre is presenting a stage adaptation of the 2nd-century Tamil epic following the fateful journey of Kannagi, the devoted wife of Kovalan, and her timeless legend about chastity, truth, and the devastating cost of injustice. **Where: Jagriti Theatre, Whitefield; When: February 7, 8, 3.30 pm and 7.30 pm**

05 Melody & metaphor

Piyush Mishra will be performing live as part of the Aarambh 2.0 India Tour, redefining live performance by blending music, poetry, and theatre into an unforgettable experience. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield; When: January 17, 7 pm**

Deck the halls, but don't wreck the planet

Church's unique Christmas tree, made of reused fabric, highlights how decorations can be created using eco friendly, locally available materials, showcasing that sustainability and celebration can go together

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Bengaluru's Mar Thoma Church on Primrose Road has once again drawn attention this Christmas with a unique eco-friendly Christmas tree standing over 25 feet tall, made entirely from old sarees. Designed and assembled by members of the church choir, the installation reinforces a message the congregation has consistently championed for nearly 17 years: that festive celebrations need not come at the cost of the environment.

The towering conical tree, visible from afar, is built on a metal wire framework layered with hundreds of fabric panels cut from discarded sarees collected from church members. The overlapping patches of green, blue and patterned cloth mimic the texture of pine leaves, giving the tree a vibrant, handcrafted appearance, both by day and when lit up at night. The reuse of fabric not only reduces waste but also adds a deeply local and personal touch to the decoration.

Inside the church premises, matching Christmas wreaths complement the main installation. These wreaths are made from waste cloth cuttings sourced from a garment manufacturer, creatively wrapped and illuminated with lights, proving that even industrial scraps can be transformed into festive décor.

Christmas decorations at Mar Thoma Church, made of reused materials

Eco-friendly endeavour

Daniel Thomas, a member of the Primrose Mar Thoma Church choir, said that the idea is simple: almost anything, especially decorations, can be made using eco-friendly, locally available materials that are often lying unused in homes. "Through these trees, we want to show that sustainability and celebration can go hand in hand. This year's saree tree is part of a long-standing tradition at the church that dates back to 2008. For over 17 years, the congregation has consciously avoided conventional plastic decorations, opting instead for recycled and environmentally responsible materials," said Thomas, adding that each year has seen a new theme, showcasing both creativity and environmental awareness.

Renewed by reuse

Over the years, the church has used plastic bottles and old tyres, video tapes and plastic bags, dry vegetables and grasses, jacquard loom cards, newspapers, used plastic covers, soft drink bottles, cloth scraps, corrugated boxes, straws and coconut shells, electric wire sleeves, packaging straps, shredded paper, industrial reject materials, aluminium foil, bamboo strips, basket weaves and even old CDs.

In 2022, the Christmas decorations were made mainly using bamboo strips, crafted with the support of a visually impaired basket weaver Satish and his wife Lakshmi from the Bamboo Bazaar area. The bamboo was sourced through community support, while old CDs were collected from church members. The Christmas wreaths inside were made using basket weaves and decorated with reused CDs.

Materials often destined for landfills become Christmas decorations, sparking conversations on waste, consumption and responsibility, says church choir member

In 2021, members of the Church created a towering 25-foot eco-friendly Christmas tree as a Made in India initiative. The tree was crafted using aluminium foil, carton boxes and newspapers, all of which were later handed over to recycling agents after the festive season.

Thomas said, "In many cases, the materials we use would otherwise end up in landfills. By reimagining them as Christmas decorations, we're also starting conversations about waste, consumption and responsibility."

Beyond aesthetics, the initiative has become an educational exercise for both children and adults in the congregation, inspiring families to rethink how they decorate their own homes during festivals.

All spruced up, city's ready for Christmas cheer

Across Bengaluru, festive decorations and enthusiastic citizens highlight city's Christmas spirit

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Bengaluru has slipped into full Christmas mode, with churches, streets and markets glowing with festive colour and cheer. Across the city, illuminated stars hang from balconies, churches shimmer with lights and Christmas cribs draw visitors through the day. The sound of carols fills neighbourhoods, while brightly decorated Christmas trees and festive trays line shopfronts, adding to the celebratory mood. "From early morning to late evening, the city reflects a sense of warmth and anticipation as families prepare for one of the most loved festivals of the year," said Michael Pinto, a college student.

Market buzz

The shopping rush has picked up sharply, with markets witnessing brisk sales of Christmas decorations and gifts. Colourful stars, balloons, bells, Santa Claus figurines, cribs depicting the life of Jesus and decorative lights are in high demand. Ready-made Santa costumes, caps and accessories are selling fast, traders say. Temporary stalls outside prominent churches, especially around Shivajinagar and the St Mary's Basilica, are drawing large crowds. Artificial Christmas trees range from small table-top versions priced at around Rs 500 to taller 15-foot trees costing up to Rs 15,000. Vendors say business has improved compared to last year, with figurines of Jesus, Mary and Joseph attracting steady interest.

Spiritual theme

Church leaders have said that this year's Christmas celebrations carry a deeper message, with the festival of joy centred on the theme of hope and a renewed focus on faith, service and compassion. They have emphasised that Christmas reflects Christ's message of love and service to humanity, going beyond mere celebration to encourage sharing hope and doing good. The spiritual highlight of the season is the Midnight Mass on December 24, with large numbers of devotees gathering to welcome Christmas.

Christmas setup outside St Mary's Basilica has been drawing huge crowds

City events

Several churches, schools and colleges are hosting Christmas-related programmes, including carol singing, cultural performances and carnivals for students and parents. In some areas, crib-making competitions have been organised, with winners set to receive prizes such as decorative items and cakes. Malls, garment stores and jewellery showrooms have also joined the festive push, displaying giant Christmas trees and Santa figures to attract shoppers.

MG Road, Brigade Road inspected ahead of Christmas and New Year celebrations

As part of safety measures, Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemanth Kumar Singh carried out a comprehensive field inspection along the MG Road–Brigade Road corridor, a key hub for festive celebrations, to review security and crowd management measures for Christmas and New Year festivities. The inspection follows a visit to Indiranagar, with further checks planned for Koramangala and other areas.

KAUSHIK JN

Inspections aim to verify readiness for upcoming festivities

After the field inspection, the Commissioner told the media that specific holding areas have been set up to manage crowd movement temporarily. He urged citizens to cooperate with police personnel and plan their travel in advance, noting that, unlike previous years, free access to Brigade Road will not be allowed this time.

The current phase focuses on intensive on-ground reviews to assess preparedness and identify operational gaps.

To ensure safety, unrestricted access to MG Road and Brigade Road will not be allowed this year. Controlled entry, designated holding areas, and strict crowd regulation measures will be enforced. Parking will be prohibited within the celebration zones, and citizens are advised to use remote parking and public transport.

The inspection also assessed CCTV coverage, AI-based crowd monitoring, barricading arrangements, and emergency response protocols. Emphasising the #CelebrateResponsibly campaign, the Commissioner urged citizens to celebrate with caution and cooperate with authorities. Real-time updates, advisories, and safety instructions will be shared on official Bengaluru City Police channels, and the public is advised to dial 112 in case of emergencies.

During the field inspection, the Commissioner, accompanied by senior officers including Joint Commissioners C Vamsi Krishna and Karthik Reddy, and Deputy Commissioners Sahil Bagla, Anoop Shetty, and Akshay Hakay, assessed on-ground preparations. Police officials have been coordinating with multiple departments for over a month, and these visits are intended to verify readiness and identify any operational gaps. —BMB

CRIME FILES

Gang busted for honey trap scheme, five arrested

Within a span of 20 days, the RR Nagar police have arrested a five-member gang, including two women, for allegedly honey-trapping, robbing and assaulting a 31-year-old software engineer on two occasions.

The arrested accused have been identified as Sumalatha alias Anjali (28) of Annapurneshwari Nagar, Harshini alias Sweety (26) of BHEL Layout, and their associates Jagadish (35), Manjunath (30) and Lokesh (32), all residents of Vidyaranyapura.

According to the police, the victim received a message on December 1 from an unknown Telegram ID offering companionship and a video call through a dating platform. The woman demanded Rs 20,000, which the victim agreed to pay. The woman later shared a location in RR Nagar. When the victim arrived, she allegedly took him into a house, asked him to undress, snatched Rs 20,000 in cash and his mobile phone, and threatened to make an explicit video viral. The victim managed to retrieve his phone and flee without approaching the police.

On December 20, the victim was contacted again using a different Telegram ID under the name Sweety. Trusting her, he went to a new location, where the woman allegedly arrived with three accomplices. The gang reportedly robbed him of Rs 20,000, assaulted him and demanded Rs 1 lakh, threatening to kill him if he failed to pay. Hearing his cries for help, passersby alerted the police, who rushed to the spot and arrested all five accused. The stolen cash was recovered and returned to the victim. A case has been registered and further investigation is underway. —BMB

ACP, SI nabbed by Lokayukta in bribery cases

Lokayukta catches Malleshwaram ACP and sub-inspector from Chikkajala in anti-corruption sting, strict action to be taken

Two police officials have been caught by the Karnataka Lokayukta City Unit–1 for allegedly accepting bribes.

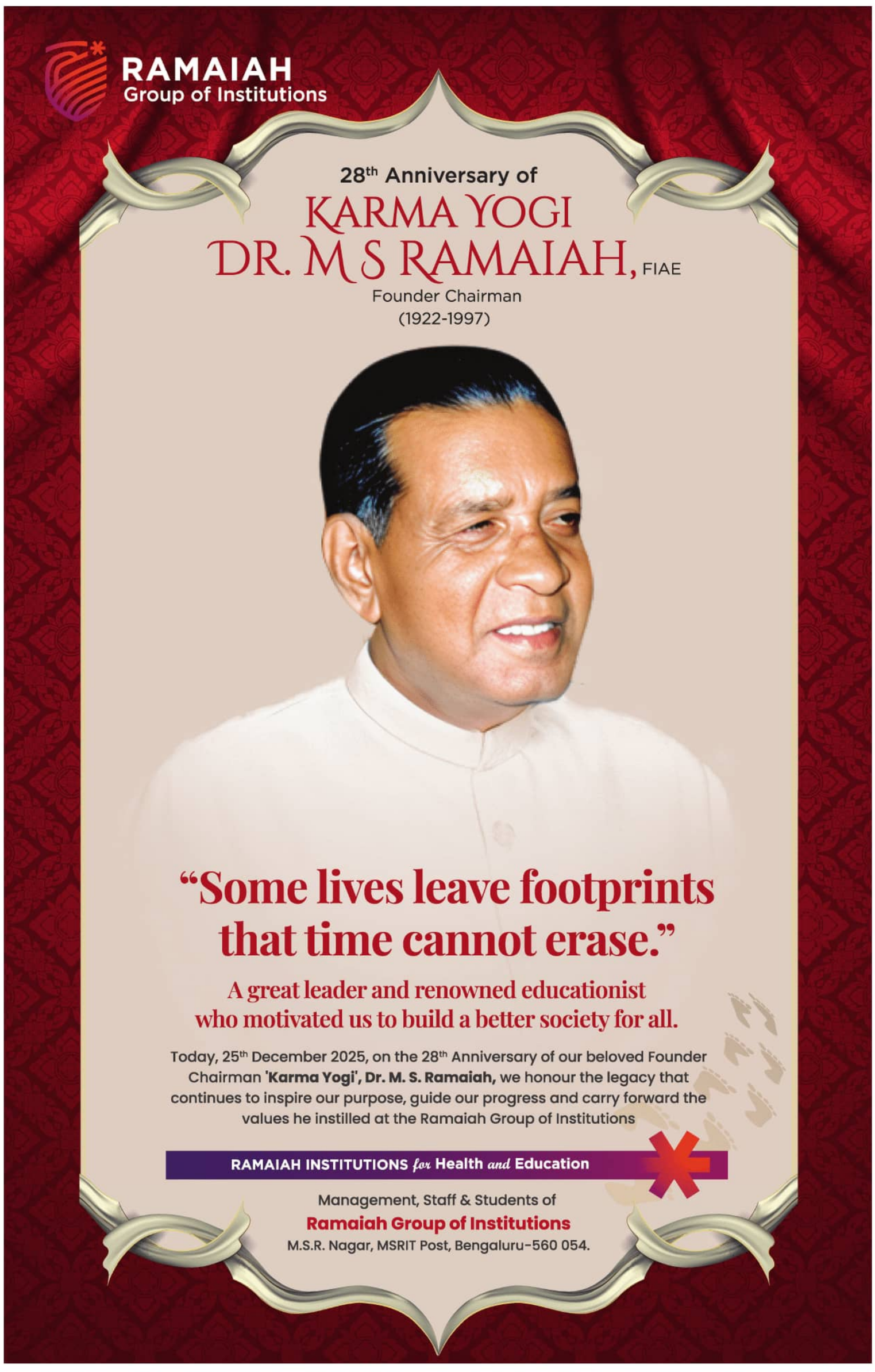
On Wednesday, in an anti-corruption operation, officials arrested a senior police official, identified as Krishna Murthy, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) of the Malleshwaram Sub-Division, Bengaluru.

According to Lokayukta officials, the ACP was caught red-handed while allegedly receiving Rs 30,000 as bribe from the complainant. The trap was laid based on a complaint filed by Sanjay Kumar, manager of Hotel Sagar located in Rajajinagar. In his complaint, Kumar alleged that the ACP had demanded Rs 50,000 to permit the hotel to operate beyond the government-prescribed closing hours.

Following negotiations, the demanded amount was allegedly reduced to Rs 30,000. Acting on the complaint, a Lokayukta team led by the Superintendent of Police (SP), City-1, conducted a meticulously planned trap operation. The ACP was apprehended at the time he allegedly accepted the chemical-laced currency notes from the complainant.

Lokayukta officials confirmed that the tainted money was recovered during the operation and necessary procedural formalities were carried out at the spot. Subsequently, a case was registered against the ACP under Section 7(c) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, as amended in 2018.

Similarly, on Tuesday, Chikkajala Police Sub-Inspector V Shivanna was caught red-handed accepting a bribe of Rs 50,000 in connection with a case. Further investigation is underway, with Lokayukta officials stating that strict action would be taken in accordance with the law. —BMB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High Court order ignored, illegal construction continues

Residents approach High Court after 40 complaints fail to stop alleged building norm violations in HAL III Stage

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Members of the HAL III Stage Taxpayers' and Residents' Association say they have been running from pillar to post, urging authorities to stop illegal constructions, particularly those violating building norms in their locality. The association claimed it has written to concerned authorities more than 40 times since February 2025, seeking action on the recurring issue, but has received no response.

Frustrated by what they described as the aloofness of the Bruhat Bengaluru City Corporation (BCCC) authorities, the association filed a writ petition before the High Court. During the hearing, the court directed the BCCC Assistant Executive Engineer to issue appropriate notices to respondent No. 5, M/s Moonlight FNB Pvt Ltd, to bring the construction in line with the sanctioned plan. The court further instructed that if the construction was not in accordance with approvals, it should be stopped forthwith and, if necessary, local police assistance should be sought.

Residents, however, alleged that the BCCC authorities failed to implement the High Court's directions. They complained that construction work continued and that the building was nearing inauguration, despite what they said were clear violations of building norms.

"The construction of the building violates setback norms and has become a nuisance for us. As a senior citizen who recently underwent knee surgery, I am finding it extremely difficult to get proper sleep due to the ongoing construction. It is frightening to imagine the situation once the proposed bar and restaurant open," said Lata, the immediate neighbour of the site. She added that the building lacked adequate space for parking vehicles.

Meenakshi Prabhu, Secretary of the HAL III Stage Taxpayers' and Residents' Association, said she had informed multiple authorities about the violations. "We have met several officials seeking a solution, but nothing has changed. BCCC engineers failed to either inspect the building under construction or direct the property owner to stop the work," she said.

Echoing these concerns, Dr Kiran M, President of the HAL 3rd Stage Taxpayers' Association, said the construction was in clear violation of setback norms, yet no action had been taken despite repeated representations. "We obtained a stay order from the court, but construction has continued. The building has a capacity of about 300 people but does not provide parking facilities. It is located within 70 metres of a school, which could negatively influence children," he said.

Citizens say construction continues despite stay order from High Court

> **"The government says as citizens group, we have to be active and vigilant, we request the govt to implement law of land and protect us residents** – Dr Kiran M, President, HAL III Stage Tax Payers' Association

Dr Kiran also raised safety concerns, stating that senior citizens in the area were particularly affected. "An eight-foot wall covered with glass has been built. In the event of a fire, like incidents seen elsewhere, it could endanger not only those inside but also nearby residential buildings," he said. He urged the government to enforce the law and protect residents.

Meanwhile, a BCCC Executive Engineer said the construction had been stopped in compliance with the court's directions. "I visited the site on Wednesday and instructed the workers to halt construction," he said.

From invisibility to pride: A café's quiet revolution

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An initiative focused on empowering Bengaluru's waste picker community was launched through a mobile outreach programme called the Invaluable Recyclers Café. The behaviour change programme uses storytelling and the power of big ideas to initiate conversations on difficult issues. A brightly branded truck travels across neighbourhoods in the city, creating spaces for learning, dialogue, and celebration within waste picker communities.

The community-led platform aims to build confidence, skills, and awareness among waste pickers. Through on-ground sessions, the Café offers training on workplace safety and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), information on income opportunities within the recycling sector, guidance on accessing government welfare schemes, and support related to health and education. It also provides a safe, welcoming space where waste pickers can share experiences, showcase talents, and strengthen dignity and belonging within Bengaluru's waste ecosystem.

Research by the Invaluables initiative in 2020 found that although many Bengalureans worried about street waste, they seldom recognised those managing it. Deep-rooted stigma and negative perceptions harmed waste pickers' dignity, self-worth, and access to opportunities. Facing discrimination, bullying, and safety concerns, many remained socially invisible, affecting how they saw themselves.

"The idea of Invaluable Recyclers Café was born from the need to build a sense of agency among waste pickers. A café is aspirational. It evokes warmth and equality, and its informality creates a space to unpack experiences, learn, and grow, nurturing self-worth and professional pride," said Soma Katiyar, Executive Creative Director behind the @ Invaluables initiative.

To address these challenges, the Invaluable Recyclers Café was designed as an outreach intervention focused on instilling confidence and self-worth while challenging long-standing discrimination and

stigma. By combining skill-building activities, entertainment, and public recognition, the Café seeks to foster pride and belonging, provide practical knowledge for personal and professional growth, and inspire wider community engagement.

Over 54 days, the Café travelled to 38 locations across Bengaluru. During this period, it directly engaged with 1,233 waste pickers and their families and reached more than 4,000 people. Neighbourhoods were transformed into lively spaces for conversation, learning, and recognition. "The initiative is powered by the Invaluables campaign under collective Saamuhika Shakti, with Hasiru Dala anchoring implementation and co-designing engagement

> **"A café is aspirational. It evokes the sense of warmth, equality and its informality creates a space to unpack experiences, learn, and grow, nurturing a sense of self worth and professional pride**
> – Soma Katiyar, Executive Creative Director, Invaluables initiative

plans. Sparsha Trust and Sambhav Foundation contributed education, health, and skill-building components," said Tej Prakash Yadav, who leads the Invaluables initiative.

One success story is that of Anita, a waste picker from Bengaluru. After attending Green Skill training by Hasiru Dala, she was inspired by Indhumathi, a former waste picker who now runs a Textile Recovery Facility (TRF). Motivated by this journey, Anita began collecting and sorting textile waste independently, supplying tonnes to the TRF. Today, she runs a scrap shop and educates others about textile recycling, upcycling, and starting small waste-based businesses.

The impact endured.

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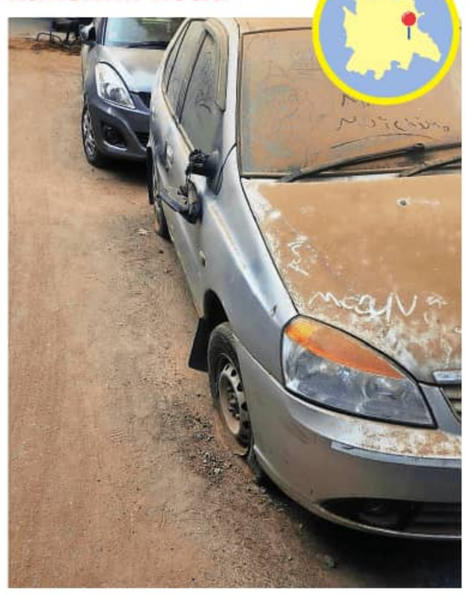
Civic neglect

Gandhi Bazaar

Left unattended, a vacant plot in Gandhi Bazaar has turned into a hub of illegal activities, triggering serious safety and sanitation concerns and calls for swift action by civic authorities.

Road obstruction

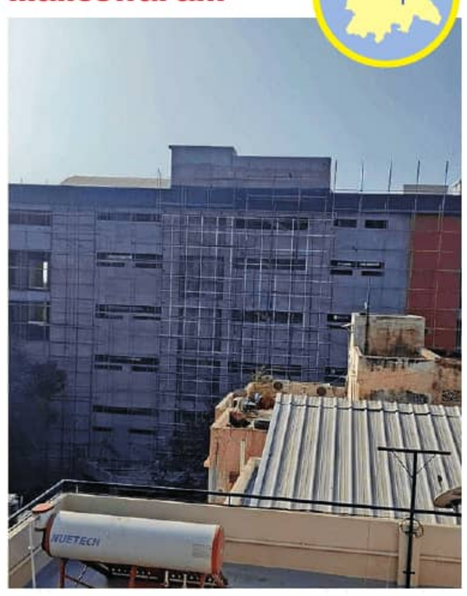
Lakshmi Road



An abandoned car has been left unattended on Lakshmi Road in Shantinagar for over six months, causing inconvenience to residents and raising safety concerns.

Endless delay

Malleswaram



More than 15 years on, construction of the Malleswaram Flower Market remains incomplete, with the GBA yet to finish the long-delayed project.

Fake call centre scam busted

Sixteen nabbed as US victims trapped via online threat racket

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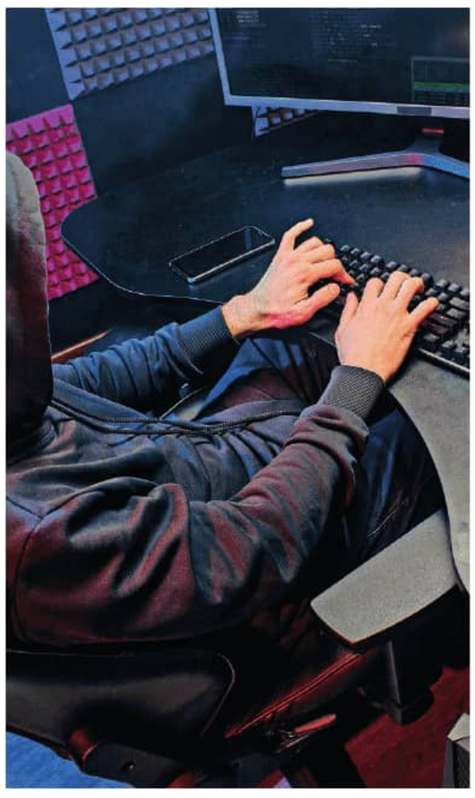
The HSR Layout police on Wednesday busted a fake call centre operating under the name Cybits Solutions Pvt. Ltd., which allegedly defrauded American citizens by running a large-scale "digital arrest" cyber scam. Sixteen persons from multiple States have been arrested in connection with the case.

The racket came to light on October 7 following a suo motu complaint filed by a police inspector of the HSR Layout Police Station after receiving credible information about cyber fraud activities being carried out from a building within the station's jurisdiction.



Fake BPO set-up and recruitment

According to the police, the accused had set up a fraudulent BPO-style operation spread across the second and third floors of a commercial building on 27th Main Road, 1st Sector, HSR Layout. Job advertisements were allegedly posted on platforms such as WorkIndia and LinkedIn, offering employment in international BPO services along with accommodation, transport and food facilities.

Around 20 to 25 young men and women from different States were allegedly lured to Bengaluru and accommodated in rented buildings in the HSR Layout and BTM areas. Police said the recruits were provided cab services from their PG accommodations to the office, meals during working hours, and nearly three weeks of telecaller training.

Investigators stated that several workers were allegedly threatened with police complaints if they refused to continue working. They were trained to impersonate officials from US law enforcement and investigative agencies and were made to operate using live SIP calling servers through the Eyebeam application.

'Digital arrest' modus operandi

Police said the accused impersonated US officials, threatening victims with fake drug and money laundering charges. Using forged court warrants and ID cards, they coerced victims into transferring money to accounts controlled by the scammers. Investigators found that fraud scripts were stored online, enabling repeated attacks on multiple victims.

Raids, seizures and expansion of probe

During the investigation, police raided the premises and seized 41 computer systems with accessories, attendance registers, handwritten fraud scripts, 25 mobile phones, forged identity cards, EPABX systems, network switches, routers and other networking equipment.

Further investigation revealed that similar illegal call centres had been set up at four different locations within HSR Layout. Police rushed to raid the remaining locations; however, some accused reportedly fled after learning about the initial raid. The police later seized and sealed all identified offices.

Although the company was registered with the Registrar of Companies and was a ROS-certified entity, police said the operations conducted were entirely illegal.

Arrests and background

The arrested include Madev Singh, Francis Fernandes, Minot, Karthik Raju, and 12 others from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, MP, West Bengal, and Meghalaya. Two are repeat cyber fraud offenders. Associates and newcomers were roped in, with statements recorded before a magistrate.

The company directors, identified as Manipal Singh and Vikram Singh, were also named as accused. Vikram Singh has been arrested, while Manipal Singh is absconding. His anticipatory bail plea before the High Court has been rejected.

Technical challenges

Police said the fraud was carried out entirely through live cloud-based servers, posing challenges to data recovery.

"The illegal call centre was operating across two floors using live servers. The accused confessed to calling US citizens, posing as border security officials, and placing them under so-called 'digital arrest' by claiming their parcels contained illegal substances. Since the operation ran on live cloud servers, no data was stored locally, which has hindered retrieval. The arrested accused had no access to cloud server login credentials but were fully aware that the activity was illegal," a senior police official said.

Police said further investigation is under way to identify additional victims, trace financial transactions and establish whether the racket has international linkages. Given the scale and complexity of the fraud, the case has now been transferred to the Cyber Economic and Narcotics (CEN) Police under the Commissioner's Office for further probe.

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Instagram romance ends in violence

The Jnanabharathi police have arrested a 29-year-old man for allegedly assaulting and harassing a young woman near her paying guest (PG) accommodation.

Police said the accused and the woman had been in a consensual relationship for three years after meeting on Instagram. In recent days, the woman blocked him on phone and social media, following which he allegedly became agitated. On December 22, at around 3.20 pm, the accused allegedly went to the PG to confront the woman. When she refused to speak to him and rejected his advances, an argument broke out and escalated into a scuffle. During the altercation, he allegedly assaulted the woman. Based on the woman's complaint, police registered a case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and arrested the accused within 24 hours. Further investigation is underway. —BMB

Night assault on Blinkit riders

The Thalaghattapura police have registered a case after two delivery executives were allegedly attacked and robbed by unknown assailants in Anjanapura on Sunday night, leaving one seriously injured.

According to police, the incident occurred on December 22, at around 8 pm, when the victims were returning on their two-wheelers after completing deliveries.

An autorickshaw allegedly brushed against one of the motorcycles on Vajramuni Main Road. When the rider stopped to check the vehicle, two men in the autorickshaw began arguing with him. As his colleague approached, the assailants allegedly stabbed him in the back with a sharp weapon and robbed both men of their mobile phones, valued at around ₹29,000 in total, before fleeing the scene. The injured man was hospitalized, and police are tracing the accused. —BMB

Traffic police launch major towing drive

To clear vehicles parked indiscriminately on major city roads, urban local bodies have decided to provide towing vehicles directly to the traffic police. Tenders have been invited to hire towing vehicles on a rental basis for all five city corporations, which will then be handed over to the traffic police for enforcement. Officials said that one towing vehicle will be provided to the traffic police in each zone to deal with rampant illegal parking on key roads. They also stated that comprehensive development works on major roads are planned, and details of newly resurfaced stretches will be shared with the police.
To protect fresh road surfaces, instructions have been issued to restrict vehicular movement for at least 24 hours after resurfacing, following a coordination meeting of various departments. — BMB

Woman set ablaze

A 40-year-old woman sustained critical burns after a man allegedly set her mother on fire with petrol in Saneguruvanahalli, Basaveshwaranagar, at around 1 a.m. last night. The victim, Geetha, who suffers burns over 50 per cent of her body, is undergoing treatment at Victoria Hospital. The accused, Muthu, who ran a nearby tea shop, is absconding.

Police said Geetha had refused to marry her 19-year-old daughter to Muthu due to his alcoholism. Following an argument, he reportedly waited until Geetha slept before dousing her with petrol and fleeing. Her daughter and neighbours managed to save her. Basaveshwaranagar Police have registered a case of attempted murder. — BMB

Five city corporations demand extra goverment funds

Bengaluru's five city corporations have reported wide disparities in tax collection and resource mobilisation, prompting them to seek higher government grants to manage civic works. Greater Bengaluru Authority Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao said it was true that tax collection varied significantly from one corporation to another and that, despite an increased focus on revenue generation, some corporations continued to lag. "The West City Corporation has recorded the lowest tax collection," he said.

Rao added that all five city corporations, including the low-revenue West City Corporation, had formally sought higher allocations to meet their expenditure needs. A representation has been sent to the government, and further action will be taken based on its decision. He said the five corporations aimed to improve services, not tax collection, but acknowledged some areas face resource challenges and ordered stricter tax efforts. — BMB

Crime surge triggers new Chikkabanavara police station in Peenya Jurisdiction

With offences soaring in industrial and migrant-heavy neighbourhoods, the govt approves a new police station to strengthen law-and-order enforcement

Sanjana CS
c-sanjana.s@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Rising crime, dense worker housing and student influx have pushed authorities to carve out Chikkabanavara jurisdiction, redeploying officers to improve policing without extra financial burden on the state

As crime cases have increased nearly tenfold in the Peenya Soldevanahalli Judistrication over the past three years, an area crowded with industrial workers, students and migrants, authorities have approved the setting up of a new Chikkabanavara Law and Order Police Station to improve policing and curb offences such as robbery, drug peddling, housebreaking, cybercrime and crimes against women and children.

According to official data, the jurisdictions of Soladevanahalli and Peenya police stations together have reported an average of 3,010 crime cases over the past three years, marking a sharp rise compared to earlier periods. Citing this surge and the growing pressure on existing police infrastructure, the Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG & IGP) recently proposed the establishment of a new police station to strengthen law and order in the area.

The proposal was examined by the DG & IGP and subsequently approved by the state government. Following this, an official order was issued on December 23 to establish the Chikkabanavara Law and Order Police Station under the Bengaluru City Police Commissionerate. The new police station will function with 51 redeployed personnel, including one Police Inspector, two Police Sub-Inspectors, 12 Head Constables and 36 Police Constables.

In the proposal submitted to government police officials highlighted that the Peenya Industrial Area employs a large workforce, many of whom reside within the same locality. This has resulted in high population density and increased policing challenges. The area also hosts several major educational institutions, attracting a significant number of out-of-state and foreign students. With continuous migration driven by employment, education and business opportunities, rapid urbanisation has contributed to a steady rise in crime, officials said.

To address offences such as robbery, drug-related crimes, housebreaking, cybercrime, and crimes against women and children, authorities stressed the need for a dedicated police station at Chikkabanavara. In the proposal submitted to the government, the DG & IGP referred to the recommendations of the Sri Dharmaveera National Police Commission, which advocates the establishment of new police stations based on crime load and population density. While the commission had earlier suggested a benchmark of 300 IPC cases for setting up a police station, officials noted that changing policing practices over the past 40 years have made it difficult to apply these recommendations in their original form.

Crime data submitted along with the proposal showed that Bagalgunte police station registered 403 FIRs and 63 Unnatural Death Reports (UDRs), while Soladevanahalli registered 366 FIRs and 70 UDRs this year up to October 5, totalling 769 cases. In 2023, the two stations together recorded 885 FIRs and 113 UDRs, followed by 996 FIRs and 134 UDRs in 2024. Before the proposal for the new station, Bagalgunte police station had registered 195 FIRs and Soladevanahalli 435 FIRs over the past three years. After carving out areas for the new jurisdiction, the total number of crime cases under Chikkabanavara stands at 630. The letter further noted that exisiting anti-naxal force unit which has sanction strength of 262 posts from that 51 personnel will be redeployed, ensuring the new station is set up without any additional financial burden on the government.

To curb rising crime within Bengaluru city limits, a request has been made to establish and sanction a new Chikkabanavara Law and Order Police Station by selecting out certain areas from the Bagalgunte and Soladevanahalli police station jurisdictions.

BIAL says all services provided for passenger convenience

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in Bengaluru have brought about significant inconvenience and unnecessary struggles for countless travelers. My recent experience left me deeply concerned, especially considering how this impacts seniors, individuals with disabilities, pregnant women, and families burdened with heavy luggage. Apart from select aggregator cabs, all other taxis and non-private vehicles are now relegated to P4 parking at Terminal 1, which is a daunting distance for anyone to cover, especially after a long flight."

Amjuri spoke to BM about his experience, which he described as extremely inconvenient. "Apart from selective cab aggregators, if we book a regular taxi, we have to walk nearly 1.5 km to P4. It is very inconvenient for persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and parents with infants and toddlers." He said there was a lot of chaos last Thursday, with cabs restricted to a single lane and people were fighting with authorities and police. "I was flying from Rajahmundry to Bengaluru. When I landed, I was not aware of the new rule as I had already booked my taxi. Earlier, pick-up points were right outside the arrival gates, but this was now restricted to selected cabs. Later, I was informed that my taxi was at P4, and I had to walk a long distance. It was very problematic. There is a buggy service, but luggage cannot be accommodated in it. There is an escalator to reach the skywalk, but to come down, one has to use a lift, which is already overcrowded or a staircase," he explained.

In the petition, he noted that previously, the pick-up point was only about a 100 mt away from the arrival gates. "This decision disregards the comfort and well-being of passengers and poses significant challenges for those who cannot walk such distances easily. It is disheartening to see elderly travelers struggling with baggage, children barely managing the long walk, and pregnant women exerting unnecessary effort after a tiring journey. There is an urgent need to revisit these rules and restore the previous pick-up point that ensured accessibility and convenience for all passengers," he has written.

Social media outburst

Meanwhile, several other passengers also shared similar experiences on social media. One X user, @devsuman1, wrote, "@BLRAirport after a 2.5-hour flight, my wife reached Bangalore, and the BIAL traffic management with no guidance or signage made her life miserable. She had to walk to P4 parking with her bags. Pathetic management at BIAL."

Another user, Tarun Agarwal, said, "Had a tough time with my senior citizen mother arriving at T1. We first had to wait for a shuttle and then at P4 parking. It took almost 40–50 minutes after a long flight. Why fix something that wasn't broken?"

Hariprakash Agrawal, Founder RideAlly posted on platform X, "@BLRAirport's new pickup rule is hurting passengers, drivers, and small cab operators, all to push high-priced parking revenue. This is not about smoother traffic. This is about money over people. Passengers are confused and stressed. Drivers are penalised unfairly. Small cab vendors, who run on thin margins, are struggling to survive. Large aggregators will adjust and even benefit. Local drivers and independent operators will not. What's disappointing is that Bengaluru's reputation for empathy and progressive thinking is being sacrificed for short-term gains. This is classic penny wise, pound foolish decision-making.I hope better sense prevails. Let us pause and think about the livelihoods at stake. The silence from the Government so far is worrying. This issue deserves urgent attention." BIAL has posted its response on social media that services have been provided such as the buggy service available at arrival and departure gates, elevators and escalators for seamless movements along with trolleys for baggage and a travelator for convenience. Avinash Bhat, a Media Communication professional, said, " Last week I landed at BIAL and asked a taxi to pick me up at Terminal 2, and the driver could not come to the arrival and told me about the new rules. The staff were helpful and directed me, and I informed the driver."

He said it took the cab 10 minutes to reach him, by which time the entire basement was jammed. "Some cabs were being charges because according to the staff they had overstayed. But they hadn't overstayed, it was because the cabs were stuck due to the jam. I ended up leaving the T2 parking bay after an hour. Another issue is that they authorised certain cab aggregators at arrivals. And with my experience on a Sunday evenings, the cab aggregators are charging ₹1,500–2,500 and these are getting preference, while others who can't afford have to walk nearly a kilometre away to the designated zones to take a taxi. It is not a passenger-friendly initiative. At T1, even the buggy service covers only a short distance, and passengers are dropped off and then they have to walk again. For those carrying heavy luggage will face issues," Bhat said.

Sirsi gets monkey fever testing lab

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao on Tuesday announced that a new Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD) testing laboratory will soon become operational in Sirsi to strengthen Karnataka's preparedness against monkey fever. The decision follows a review meeting at Vidhana Soudha, aimed at easing pressure on the lone Shivamogga lab. The Sirsi facility will serve nearby regions, enabling faster diagnosis and early treatment. Surveillance has intensified, with all confirmed cases recovering. Referral hospitals, trained doctors, free ambulances and treatment are assured, while ICMR trials a new vaccine. — BMB

Kannadiga coach sparks kabaddi boom abroad

While the Pro Kabaddi League in India focuses on nurturing homegrown talent, a Kannadiga coach has quietly triggered a kabaddi transformation in Thailand. After a successful stint in the Pro Kabaddi ecosystem, veteran coach Ravi Shetty was appointed India's coach for the 3rd Junior Kabaddi World Cup in Iran in March 2023. During the tournament, Thailand Kabaddi Association Secretary General Somprach Phonchoo offered him the role of head coach of Thailand's national team, which Shetty took up in May 2023. Since then, he has strengthened training systems, raised competitive standards and promoted grassroots growth across Southeast Asia. His innovations, including Kabaddi Three Star and Super Five formats, are now internationally approved and featured at the SEA Games, expanding the sport's global footprint and competitive appeal. — BMB

Roma Hemvani breaks yoga meditation record

Roma Hemvani, a yoga and meditation practitioner from Lucknow, performed a remarkable water meditation in padmasana with dhyaan mudra for 2 hours, 7 minutes and 20 seconds on December 21, 2025, marking International Meditation Day. Observing complete silence throughout the day, Hemvani's practice was rooted in the principles of Maharishi Patanjali and symbolised inward focus on the shortest day of the year. The programme director, Bhavika Wadhvani, said the meditation underscored the importance of internal awareness and discipline. Hemvani draws inspiration from Maharishi Patanjali, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and yoga guru Baba Ramdev. Held in Bengaluru and organised by Brilarte, the event was officially recorded by the Yogaasana Book of World Records. The attempt was witnessed by Dr Amarjeet Yadav, Dr Yash Parashar, Dr Malvika and Vinayak S Amberkar of the Karnataka Ayurveda, Naturopathy, Siddha, Unani and Yoga Practitioners Registration Board. — BMB

Darshan's wife files complaint over obscene social media posts

Vijayalakshmi, the wife of actor Darshan, has approached the Cyber Crime Police Station after several social media users allegedly posted obscene comments and images targeting her and her family.

She met the Additional Commissioner of Police of the Crime and Criminal Branch (CCB) at the City Police Commissioner's office and filed a formal complaint on Wednesday. Vijayalakshmi submitted screenshots of abusive messages and comments, and an FIR is registered.

In her complaint, Vijayalakshmi explained that the harassment began after she told fans during an event for the film Devil in Davangere not to be influenced by rumours or comments about Darshan. Following this, miscreants started posting offensive remarks about her and the family. The complaint highlights that some perpetrators used her old photographs to create posts with obscene captions. The FIR names 18 social media accounts, including Yogi Kiccha, Mr. Anath, Mahi Kiccha, and Virat Kiccha. **BMB**

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Plastic rules are meant to be moulded

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

premises throughout the week or as long as the movie is being screened. These buntings are an eyesore too.

"I welcome fans decorating theater premises with cloth buntings instead of plastic buntings. Fans should not indulge in such activities without thinking about the environment," said Sadashiva Murthy P, a movie buff.

When contacted, Venkatesh Reddy, who manages Narthaki and Sapna theaters on KG Road, said that he has already advised fans not to use single-use plastic for decoration.

Meanwhile, KV Chandrasekhar, president, Film Exhibitors Association, said there were occasions when the then BBMP officials served notices for use of plastic buntings for decoration. "I have made it a rule that those who decorate the theater premises must remove all the material used for decoration after the movie is withdrawn from screening.

They have to remove the cutouts, garlands and plastic buntings from the theater premises. It is their responsibility to dispose of such material," he said.

'Marriage is sacred': HC denies woman divorce

The Karnataka High Court has declined to grant divorce to a woman, observing that under Hindu law, marriage is viewed as a sacred and enduring relationship, and not merely a civil or contractual arrangement that can be dissolved lightly. A division bench comprising Justice Jayant Banerji and Justice Umesh M Adiga was hearing an appeal challenging a 2018 Family Court order which had rejected the woman's plea for divorce filed on the ground of cruelty under Section 13(1)(ia) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.

In its ruling, the High Court underlined that a Hindu marriage is solemnised through religious rituals and vows, symbolising a lifelong commitment. The judges noted that during the marriage ceremony, the couple stands before the sacred fire and pledges to jointly pursue the four objectives of life — Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha — reinforcing the spiritual and moral foundation of the institution.

The bench remarked that the appellant appeared to have approached marriage in a casual manner. It observed that the allegations made by her seemed aimed primarily at returning to her parental home to continue her education, rather than arising from genuine instances of cruelty within the marital relationship.

According to the case records, the couple was married in 2012 as per Hindu customs. However, the wife lived with her husband and his family for only about 21 days after the wedding. She had alleged harassment by her husband and in-laws over additional dowry demands and claimed financial dependence, stating that her husband earned around Rs 30,000 per month. She had sought dissolution of the marriage along with permanent alimony.

After examining the material on record, the High Court concurred with the Family Court's conclusion that the allegations were not supported by sufficient evidence and did not meet the legal threshold of cruelty required for granting divorce. Finding no grounds to interfere with the earlier ruling, the court dismissed the appeal. **BMB**

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I, Shivarudrappa Thandaveshwara Yalagunda R/o 705/30, 1st cross, Byadarahalli, Prakruthi nagar, Bengaluru 560091 have changed my name to Thandaveshwara Yalagunda Shivarudrappa. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

I Rahul Chandramohan Sharma S/O Chandra Mohan Sharma R/O A 1005 Candeur Signature Gunjur, Varthur Bangalore - 560087 have changed my name to Rahul Sharma for all purpose.

I, Satish and Satish B Ro 35/S02 Nandana Residency Lithium Hub Dasarahalli B'lore-560024 have changed my name to Satish Sadananda Bevinamar.

I, P.JYOTHI, Aged 48 years, W/o Mr.G.Krishna, residing at No.198, Opp HLRC, 3rd Cross, Whitefield, Bangalore-560066, have changed my daughter's name from ADVIKA to ADVIKA KRISHNA NAIDU, vide affidavit dated 27.05.2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary Yankoba, Bangalore.

I, MOHAMMED ISMAIL ZABIULLAH, R/a.22, No.3B The Shams Residency, 4th A Cross, New Gurappanapalya, Bengaluru-29. I, have Changed my name to MOHAMMED ISMAIL ZABIULLA, Vide affidavit, dated 23/12/2025 Sworn before Notary: R. Basavaraja. Bangalore

I, SWETHA S KUTTY, W/o Saleem Mehaboob, R/at No.8, Behind Anganawadi, Mubarak road, M.S Palya, Vidyaranya pura Post, Bengaluru-560094, have changed my name to ZOYA FATHIMA, vide affidavit dt: 24.12.2025 Notary T.C Thimmaraja, B.lore.

I, Nazeem Unnisa Saleem W/o Mohammed Ateeulla Saleem R/o 545,2nd Main Road 7th Cross Vinobha Nagar, K G Halli B'lore-560045 have changed name to Nazeemunnisa for all purposes.

I, Shubha Madhukumar W/o Madhukumar Munivenkata - swamy R/o #36, 5th Cross,2nd Stage,A G B Layout, Mahalakshmipuram, B'luru 560086 have changed my name to Shubha Venkataswamy.

I, Nagesh Hoigegudde, s/o Hoigegudde Lakshminarayana, R/o #33/34 4th B Cross Near Kensri school Mariyannapalya B'luru-560024 have Changed my name to Nagesh Rao Hoigegudde for all Purposes.

I, Madhukumar Byrappa Munivenkataswamy S/o Byrappa Munivenkataswamy R/o #36,5th Cross,2nd Stage, B'luru 560086 have changed my name to Madhukumar Munivenkataswamy.

I, JC-675794P Nb Sub Binod Singh want to change my daughter's name from Aayashani Singh to Aishani Singh before notary pub Bangalore

I Gowrishankara Honnappa S/o, Honnappa, Residing at,No 15, Maruthi Badavane, KG Lakke ahalli, Bengaluru Rural-562123, have changed my name to Gowri Shankar Honnappa for all purposes.

I Subratakanta Das Debjeet Das S/O, Subratakanta Das R/o #005, Sm Silver Oak Apts, 1st Cross Street, Anthony Church Road, Tc Palya, Kr Puram, Bangalore, Ka - 560036 have changed my name to Debjeet Das.

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I, Mahavir Singh father of JC-675794P Nb Sub Binod Singh resi of Kanpur (UP) have changed my name to Mahaveer before notary pub Bangalore

I Medha Manjunatha Hegde w/o sandeepa H N, #1 hulakodu sagar shimoga 577401,I change my name to Medha Hegde

I, PRITISAGAR SAHU S/O PRATAP KUMAR SAHU R/O SLV RESIDENCY 2ND CROSS SAPTHAGIRI LAYOUT MUNNEKOLAL MARATHALI 560037. THAT MY FATHER NAME PRATAP KUMAR SAHU AND PRATAP SAHU IS THE NAME OF ONE AND THE SAME PERSON AND THAT IS MY FATHER.

I, JC-675794P Nb Sub Binod Singh want to change my daughter's name from Aavika Singh to Avika Singh before notary pub Bangalore.

I, MOHAMAD MEHTAB, R/a. 423/1,12th Cross, Devarajaurs Nagar, Bengaluru-26. I, have Changed my name to MOHAMMED MEHTAB, Vide affidavit, dated 23/12/2025 Sworn before Notary: R. Basavaraja. Bangalore

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I, ANAS SHARIFF, residing at No. 940, 16th cross, Chandra Layout, Nagarabhavi, Bangalore-560072, have lost original Sale deed 1st page of Document No. 3946/2017-18, on 20.11.2025 at Chandra Layout. Finders please Contact: 9901285726

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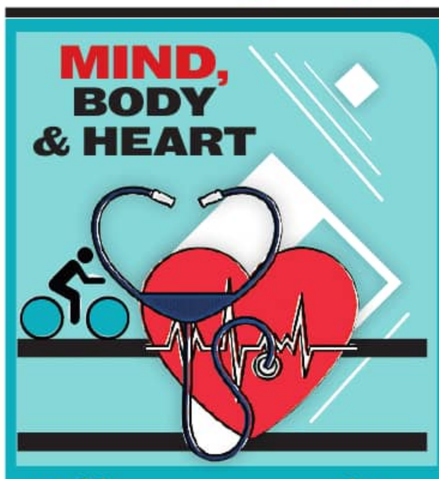
As NEETHU rolls into the coming year, she carries momentum and courage. May her wheels hum louder, her dreams rise higher and her path shine even brighter.



All you need to know about...

8 Bed Rotting Alternatives

Sometimes the best way to recharge is not staying in bed all day. Endless scrolling, half sleep and mental overstimulation often leave the brain drained rather than rested. Gentle, intentional activities can provide deeper restoration without guilt.

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Lie down comfortably, inhale four counts, hold seven, exhale eight, repeat slowly several times to activate your body's relaxation response.

Create with your hands
Doodling, knitting, sorting or crafting engages repetitive hand movements that soothe the mind and create meditative focus without pressure.

Gentle audio listening time
Choose a light podcast or audiobook and rest comfortably while listening, allowing your thoughts to wander without mental effort.

Slow stretching or yin
Spend twenty minutes in gentle stretches or yin yoga, holding poses longer and breathing deeply to release tension.

Warm bath shower ritual
Warm water relaxes muscles and lowers heart rate, while calming rituals signal your brain to slow down.

Simple gratitude journaling practice
Write three small things you appreciate today, helping your brain notice positives and reduce stress gently.

Organise one small space
Tidy one drawer or shelf briefly, enjoying the calming repetition and quiet sense of completion. These activities offer rest without stagnation, helping energy return naturally while protecting mental health and daily motivation over time with consistent gentle practice.

—Femina

DEEPFAKE CRISIS HITS CLASSROOMS

AI-generated explicit images spread among students, causing trauma, legal action, and urgent policy gaps

Schools across the United States are facing a rapidly growing problem as students increasingly use artificial intelligence to manipulate innocent images of classmates into sexually explicit deepfakes. What may begin as a prank or experiment with new technology often spirals into severe emotional, social, and legal consequences for victims, families, and school systems.

The spread of manipulated photos and videos can quickly turn into a nightmare for those targeted. Victims often face humiliation, harassment, and lasting psychological harm as explicit images circulate online, sometimes resurfacing long after initial removal efforts. Schools, meanwhile, struggle to respond effectively to incidents involving technology that evolves faster than policy.

The challenge gained national attention this fall when AI-generated nude images spread through a middle school in Louisiana. Two boys were ultimately charged under state law, but not before significant damage had been done. One victim was expelled after starting a fight with a boy she accused of creating fake nude images of her and her friends, highlighting how victims themselves can face punishment during such cases.

"While the ability to alter images has been available for decades, the rise of A.I. has made it easier for anyone to alter or create such images with little to no training or experience," Lafourche Parish Sheriff Craig Webre said in a news release. "This incident highlights a serious concern that all parents should address with their children."

The Louisiana case marked a turning point, as the prosecution is believed to be the first under the state's new law targeting deepfakes. Republican state Senator Patrick Connick, who authored the legislation, said the law reflects growing concern nationwide about the misuse of generative artificial intelligence.

In 2025, at least half of U states enacted legislation addressing deepfakes, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Many of these laws focus on the creation of realistic but fabricated images and audio, particularly simulated child sexual abuse material. Students have also been prosecuted in Florida and Pennsylvania, while expulsions have occurred in states including California. In Texas, a fifth-grade teacher was charged with using AI tools to create child pornography involving students.

Experts say deepfakes are becoming increasingly easy to produce as technology evolves. What once required technical expertise can now be accomplished through apps or social media platforms. Sergio Alexander, a research associate at Texas Christian University who studies the issue, said the barrier to entry has nearly disappeared.

"Now, you can do it on an app, you can download it on social media, and you don't have to have any technical expertise whatsoever," Alexander said.

Despite the growing threat, specialists fear schools are not doing enough to address AI-generated deepfakes. Sameer Hinduja, co-director of the Cyberbullying Research Center, said many schools lack updated policies and fail to explain the issue clearly to students.

"When students feel staff are oblivious, they may believe they can act with impunity," Hinduja said. He added that many parents assume schools are actively handling the problem when some administrators avoid confronting it altogether.

"So many of them are just so unaware and so ignorant," Hinduja said. "We see the ostrich syndrome, where schools bury their heads in the sand and hope this isn't happening among their youth."

The trauma caused by AI deepfakes can be particularly severe because of their realism and permanence. Unlike traditional bullying, which may involve rumors or messages, deepfake images and videos often go viral and continue resurfacing. This creates a cycle of repeated trauma for victims.

Many affected students experience anxiety, depression, and withdrawal, Alexander said. "They shut down because it feels impossible to prove the images are fake, especially when they look completely real."

Experts emphasise that parental involvement is critical. Alexander recommends that parents start conversations casually by asking children whether they have seen funny fake videos online. From there, parents can discuss how it might feel to be featured in such content and ask whether classmates have ever created fake images.

"Based on the numbers, I guarantee they know someone," Alexander said.

Laura Tierney, founder and CEO of The Social Institute, stresses that children must feel safe talking to adults without fear of punishment. She promotes the SHIELD approach: Stop and do not forward images, Huddle with a trusted adult, inform platforms, collect Evidence without downloading, limit social media access, and Direct victims to support.

"The complexity of that acronym shows how serious and layered this issue really is," Tierney said. —AP

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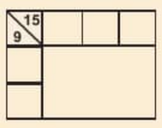
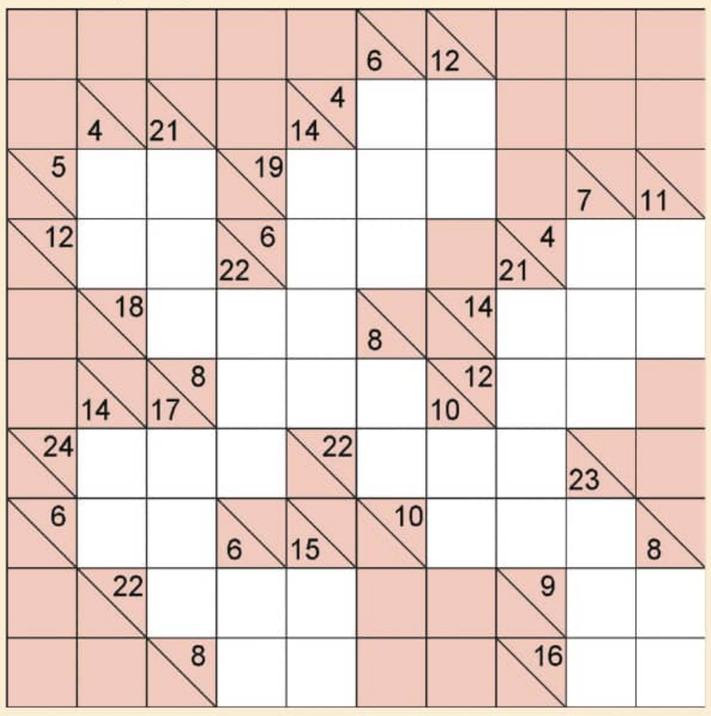
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

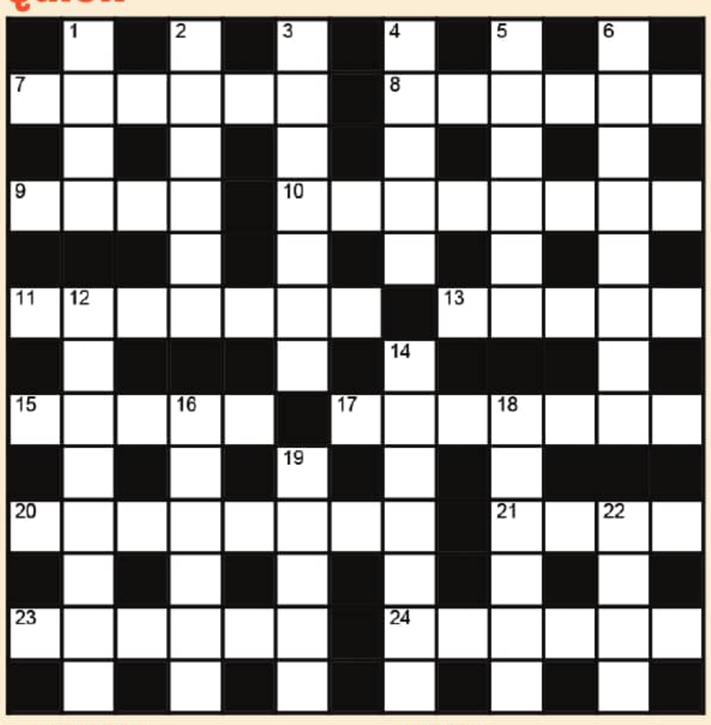
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Friendlier (6)
8 Extra space (6)
9 Intense enthusiasm (4)
10 A feudal lord (8)
11 Bitter (7)
13 Shows off (5)
15 Pile up (5)
17 Nuremberg natives (7)
20 Agra tourist attraction (3,5)
21 Hardens or sets (4)
23 Staggered (6)
24 Park spanning 300 acres in the Cantonment Area (6)

DOWN

1 Destiny (4)
2 Rudder lever (6)
3 Severe (7)
4 Fit with glass (5)
5 Closer (6)
6 Consuming or ingesting (6,2)
12 Likened or contrasted (8)
14 Put back (7)
16 Merely or easily (6)
18 Former Zimbabwe President Robert ____ (6)
19 Casts off (5)
22 Plunder (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: J EQUALS T

JUI UNKU LZPF NC PGXPTC LICHIBJIF. UZWICJT PWF NWJIKLNJT PLI PGXPTC LIXPLFIF.

Linemaro

Your smile just blew me away

Mindchow

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage

Joke of the day

Time may be a great healer, but it is a lousy beautician

Loop

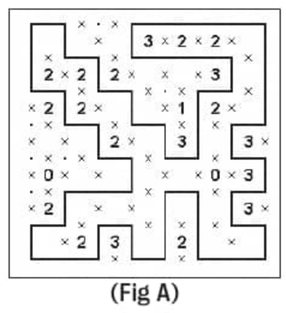
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

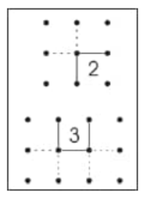
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

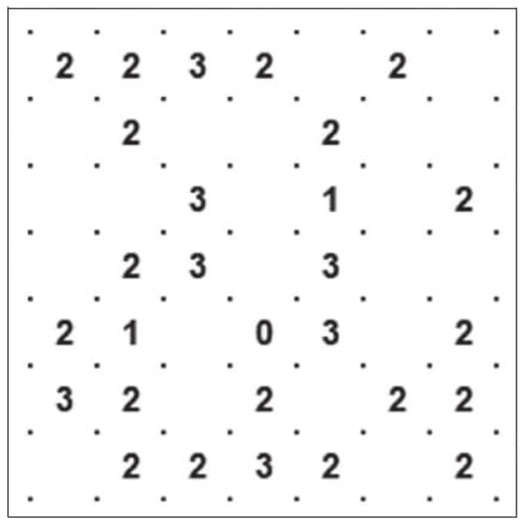
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



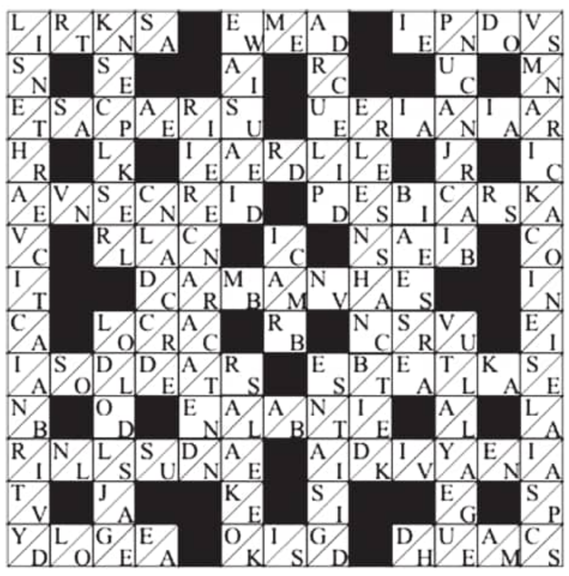
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				Y
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

1 Dears; 6 Ley eg.;
7 Resin; 8 Sane I;
9 Wet SF

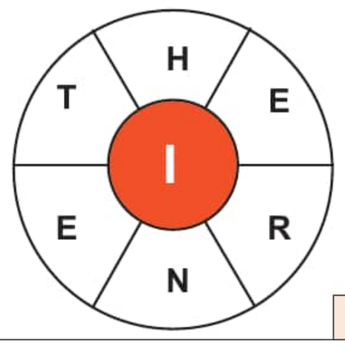
DOWN

1 Wears; 2 Alien;
3 Fires; 4 Eg set;
5 Snyde

Mensapuzzle

Which number is missing?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

13 Average; 15 Good; 17 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

1		8				9		6
	4						5	
			7	2	1			
7			8		3			9
2	8			7			4	5
9			2		6			7
			3	1	2			
	6						3	
8		3				2		4

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 1

3 3 8 9

Medium = 27

4 6 8 9

Hard = 8

4 4 7 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

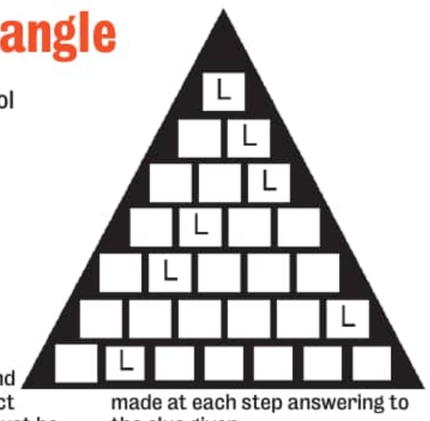
Differences: 1. Arm is moved. 2. Glove is different. 3. Bush is moved. 4. Bottom of shirt is different. 5. Stripes are added to socks. 6. Catcher's sleeve is different.

Riddler

Im powerful enough to clean most anything, Yet gentle enough to eat. Im used to make an explosion of sorts, Yet can be found at millions of stores worldwide. I can kill grass, And even tenderize your meat. I can clean up even the smelliest stench, and soften your fabrics. What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 The 12th letter
2 Aluminium symbol
3 Bud
4 Traps partner
5 Position
6 Package
7 Guitar picks



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

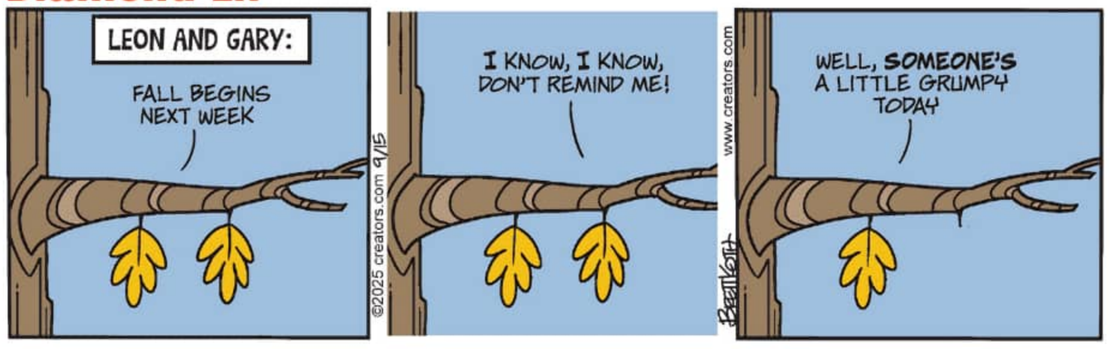
COMICS

Popeye

I STILL THINK YOU SHOULD FIGHT FOR YOUR LADY LOVE!
THIS SAILOR WILL NOT STAND IN OLIVE'S WAY!
SHE WILL BE HAPPY MARRIED TO A KING!
SOB!
SOB!
©2025 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
INDEED YOU HAVE A HEART OF GOLD, OL' PAL!
BUD SAGENDORF
YEAH! AN' I HAS A FISK OF IRON!! IF 'AT BLASTID KING WERE HERE I'D CROWN HIM WIT' IT!
popeye.com
3-26

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil



Hart of the city

ARE WE SURE THIS HANGOUT EVEN EXISTS? WHAT IF WE GET IN TROUBLE FOR OPENING ALL THE COOLER DOORS OR FOR NOT BUYING ANYTHING?
Wawa
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
CHILL, DEAN! WHERE'S YOUR SENSE OF ADVENTURE?
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY
I MUST HAVE LEFT IT AT HOME.

Crankshaft

I HEARD YOU SINGING IN THE YARD THE OTHER DAY, ED.
© 2025 Mediagraphics, Inc. Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication
AND OUR CHOIR AT ST. SPIRES COULD USE A GOOD BARITONE VOICE...
NO, THANKS... I'M NOT REALLY INTERESTED...
9-15
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
AND I DON'T SING VERY WELL INDOORS.

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Though others might prioritise fleeting pleasures, your Christmas focus remains on building something lasting. Consider what legacy you wish to leave, even on a small scale. A conversation about future responsibility or shared resources could surface; handle it with your trademark maturity. Your sense of duty brings deep, quiet satisfaction this holiday.

Aries Mar 21–Apr 20
Your energy attracts joy today, share vibrant enthusiasm with loved ones and fully enjoy festive celebrations. Your magnetism enhances gatherings and creates memorable moments; spread warmth and laughter generously with those nearby.

Taurus Apr 21–May 20
Find stability and comfort in family traditions today; savour warmth and grounded connection. Your steady presence fosters a harmonious atmosphere, making celebrations feel secure, meaningful, and deeply satisfying for everyone present.

Gemini May 21–Jun 21
Curiosity and sociability shine, engage in meaningful conversations and explore diverse viewpoints. Your wit and openness create lively exchanges that deepen bonds, fostering connection and unexpected joyous discoveries among friends and family.

Cancer Jun 22–July 23
Nurturing instincts take center stage, care for loved ones and create emotional warmth. Your empathy comforts others and enhances celebration, making gatherings feel inclusive, heartfelt, and deeply connected through thoughtful gestures and presence.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Your charisma spreads festive cheer, lead merriment and laughter with confidence. Your flair uplifts spirits and creates joyful moments; step forward, celebrate boldly, and let your natural magnetism enrich the holiday atmosphere today.

Virgo Aug 24–Sep 23
Allow yourself lightheartedness, release perfectionism and enjoy spontaneous joy. Focus on connecting rather than controlling every detail; embracing holiday magic invites new, imperfectly wonderful memories filled with warmth and ease.

Libra Sep 24–Oct 22
Seek balance and beauty in celebrations, cultivate harmony and ease tensions gracefully. Your diplomatic touch smooths interactions, creating peaceful, aesthetically pleasing experiences that enhance enjoyment and meaningful connections today.

Scorpio Oct 23–Nov 22
Dive into deep, honest conversations, use this time for transformative connection. Release old resentments through forgiveness and foster emotional healing. Meaningful exchange strengthens bonds and enriches the festive experience with depth.

Sagittarius Nov 23–Dec 22
Adventurous spirit thrives, explore new traditions and share buoyant optimism. Your openness to novelty inspires joy and broader perspectives; embrace experiences that expand horizons and bring spontaneous happiness to celebrations.

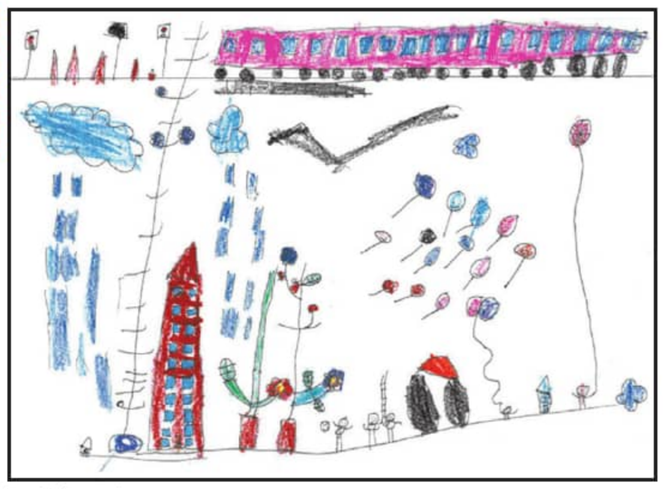
Capricorn Dec 23–Jan 20
Find joy in simplicity, focus on meaningful moments rather than extravagance. Your practical approach supports stable, sincere celebrations that honour true values. Share gratitude and presence with those who matter most today.

Aquarius Jan 21–Feb 19
Innovate holiday fun, share unique ideas to create memorable experiences. Your originality sparks fresh celebrations and inclusive moments. Invite others into creative activities that surprise and delight, building unforgettable memories together.

Pisces Feb 20–Mar 20
Trust your intuition and bring compassionate care to gatherings, your empathy deepens connections and fosters warmth. Tune into others' feelings, offer gentle support, and create a nurturing, emotionally rich holiday atmosphere today.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Rushi, Bengaluru

Sanjanna, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
14-((12-20))-9=
14-(-8)=
14+8-9=
22-9=
13

RIDDLER
Baking Soda.

STRIKE OUT

I	R	K	S		W	E	D		E	P	O	S		
T	A	P	E	R	S		U	R	A	N	I	A		
N		E		I		R			U		M			
H		L		E	E	R	I	E		J		C		
E	V	E	N	E	D		D	E	B	A	R	K		
V		R	A	N		C		N	A	B		O		
I		C	A	B	A	N	A	S				N		
C		O	R	C		R		C	R	U		E		
I	S	L	E	T	S		S	T	A	L	K	S		
N		D		E	L	A	T	E		L		L		
I	L	L	U	D	E		A	D	V	A	N	I		
T		A		E		I		P		G		P		
	T													

FAST FIVE

R	A	S	E	D
E	L	E	G	Y
S	I	R	E	N
A	N	I	S	E
W	E	F	T	S

QUOTE UNCODE
The high road is always respected. Honesty and integrity are always rewarded.

QUICK

				T		E		E		S		Y		D
														R
														E
														L
														E
														D
				I		R								O
														C
														A
														C
														E
														R
														B
														I
														C
														B
														R
														A
														G
														S

MENSA PUZZLE
7. In each circle, the sum of the digits equals 34.

BULL'S EYE
either, entire, heir, herein, hint, hire, inert, inhere, NEITHER, rein, rite, their, THEREIN, thin, tier, tine, tire

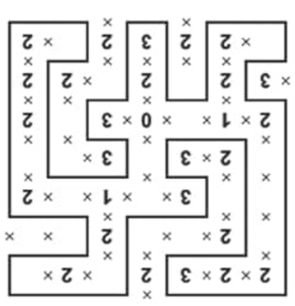
SUDOKU

8	1	3	5	6	7	2	9	4
5	6	2	9	8	4	7	3	1
4	7	9	3	1	2	5	6	8
9	3	4	2	5	6	8	1	7
2	8	6	1	7	9	3	4	5
7	5	1	8	4	3	6	2	9
6	9	5	7	2	1	4	8	3
3	4	7	6	9	8	1	5	2
1	2	8	4	3	5	9	7	6

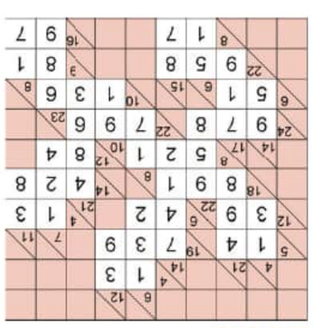
ALPHA TRIANGLE
L, Al, Pal, Clap, Place, Parcel, Plectra.

GO FIGURE
Easy
3 + 9 - 3 - 8 = 1
Medium
4 + 6 + 9 + 8 = 27
Hard
7 + 9 - 4 - 4 = 8

LOOP



KAKURO



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Exploring fear, faith and redemption in '45'

Music director Arjun Janya makes his debut as a director in Sandalwood with this film. Known for being spiritual and humble, he has chosen a script that blends mythological and physical worlds. The speciality of the script lies in its uniqueness, although it may be slightly difficult for the common audience to understand the meaning of the title, 45. The film also explains five fears and the need to overcome them. It conveys a message to society about the importance of being kind to animals, as they too are creations of God. Another much-needed message highlights the dangers of talking on a mobile phone while riding a two-wheeler and stresses the importance of wearing a helmet, irrespective of one's hair status—bald (wholly or partly) or hairy.

The film took more than three years to complete, and the producer spent a substantial amount of money without compromising on quality. The computer graphics, completed in Canada, add significant value to the film, especially in the climax, where the director relies heavily on them.

The story begins with Vinay (Raj B Shetty), a software engineer, riding a two-wheeler without a helmet while talking on his phone. He accidentally kills Rossy, a black dog. Rossy is said to belong to Rayappa (Upendra), an eccentric man and a don in his own world, where machine guns and traditional weapons are used to attack enemies. Rayappa decides to kill Vinay but gives him 45 days to relive his life.

Meanwhile, Vinay's girlfriend Meghana (Kaustubha Mani) takes him to Muthu, another don, seeking protection from Rayappa. At this point, the director introduces Shivanna (Dr Shiva Rajkumar), a philanthropist who owns Kasturi Nivasa, a residential colony. Shivanna assures Vinay that he will save him from Rayappa. Whether Shivanna succeeds is something the audience must watch to find out.

As far as the performances are concerned, the actors compete with one another to meet audience expectations. Dr Shiva Rajkumar is at his best in the climax, where he appears in 12 avatars of Lord Shiva. Real Star Upendra does his best to entertain fans with his signature gestures and dialogues. Raj B Shetty performs convincingly as a hapless man terrified of death. Pramod Shetty, as Altab Bhai, adds comic relief.

It touches upon the Garuda Purana and life after death. Watching it is a personal choice.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

45
3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Arjun Janya
- **ACTORS** Dr Shiva Rajkumar, Upendra, Raj B Shetty, Kaustubha Mani, Sudha Rani, and Pramod Shetty
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 150 minutes

CHEMISTRY TAKES CENTRE

From fresh debuts to beloved reunions, Bollywood jodis defined 2025

This year, Bollywood witnessed several new jodis that dominated conversations and headlines. From fresh faces making their mark to much-loved pairings returning to the big screen, 2025 delivered some of the finest on-screen chemistry. Whether set against historical grandeur or modern-day love stories, these duos carved a niche with their performances. Here's a look at the best on-screen pairings of 2025 that captured hearts and stayed with audiences.

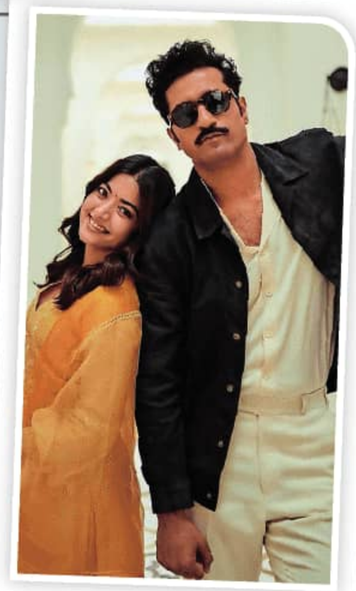
—ETimes

Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda

The newcomers made a striking debut as a pairing in Saiyaara, a romantic drama helmed by Mohit Suri. The film traces the journey of two passionate individuals whose paths cross amid dreams, heartbreak and self-discovery. The movie received considerable appreciation, especially from Gen Z viewers, who connected with both the characters and the story.

Dhanush and Kriti Sanon

Directed by Aanand L. Rai, Tere Ishk Mein features Dhanush and Kriti Sanon in a poignant love story. Their performances emerged as the film's strongest highlights. Released on 28 November 2025, the film was also made available in Tamil and Telugu.



Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna

2025 introduced audiences to a new jodi as Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna starred together in Chhaava, directed by Laxman Utekar. The duo portrayed Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj and Yesubai, respectively. Vicky's commanding screen presence, coupled with Rashmika's powerful performance as Yesubai Bhonsale, was widely appreciated. The film draws inspiration from the life of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj.

Ajay Devgn and Rakul Preet Singh

The pair had already won audience affection in the first instalment of De De Pyaar De. Reuniting for the sequel, Ajay Devgn and Rakul Preet Singh once again garnered praise in the romantic comedy directed by Anshul Sharma. Their chemistry and on-screen dynamic continued to resonate with cinephiles until the very end.

Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan

Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan played the lead roles in Metro… In Dino, helmed by Anurag Basu. Set against the chaos of urban life, the film explores intense relationships and emotional conflicts. Their fresh on-screen pairing was well received by audiences. Released in July, the film also stars Pankaj Tripathi, Konkona Sen Sharma, Ali Fazal, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Anupam Kher and Neena Gupta.

When timing failed

Melora Hardin, best known for her role in The Office, recently revisited the time she nearly starred in Back to the Future. The actor revealed that she had been cast in one of the key roles in the film; however, following Marty McFly's recasting and issues with the production team, she was eventually let go.

Here's a closer look at why the acclaimed actress was dropped from the hit movie.

Melora Hardin on why she was fired from Back to the Future

In an interview with Entertainment Weekly, Hardin shared that she was originally cast to play Marty's girlfriend in the film. However, after Eric Stoltz was removed from the project and replaced, the production team decided to let her go as well, recasting the role — a decision that left her heartbroken at the time.

She added, "'Back to the Future* was a huge disappointment. I was 17, you know. I burst into tears. It was very sad. There were quite a few of those moments that I remember — things that never really got made — but that was particularly tough."

Hardin also revealed that after Michael J. Fox was cast as Marty, the production team felt she was too tall for the role in comparison to her co-star. While the experience was deeply disappointing, she noted that it ultimately led her to one of the most iconic roles of her career in The Office.

She said the role was dropped over concerns about the male lead being overshadowed, adding that taking it would have changed her career path. Hardin also stressed that failure doesn't define a person, but helps one grow and persevere.

— ETimes